Violation of Labour laws

2821. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item "TAKE VRS OR REMAIN IDLE, WORKERS TOLD" published in the "Statesman" Calcutta dated May 31, 1998 regarding the circular of CPSU informing the workers of suspension of operations if they do not opt for VRS;

(b) if so, whether any intervention has been made by his Ministry with regard to violation of existing labour laws; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The notice given by Bharat Process and Mechanical Engineers Ltd. (BPMEL) on May 22, 1998 reminded employees of the offer of a financial package scheme whose term was expiring on 31st May, 1998. Under the Scheme benefits equivalent to VRS were available to employees upto the date of expiry. The notice also announced about suspension of operation, which had already reached very low level, on account of continuing sickness. BIFR has recommended for winding up of the Company, However, the matter is pending before Calcutta High Court.

Child Labour in Gujarat

2822. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minsiter of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of child labour in Gujarat as per Government's records along with their age-wise figure; and

(b) the details about industries in which they are found employed?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) The authentic information regarding the number of working' chiluren is made available through detinniel census. According to the last census conducted in 1991, the number of working children below the age of 14 years in the State of Gujarat is 5,23,585. The age wise details are not available.

Children have been found employed in a number of industries including weaving, diamond cutting & petro-chemicals, pharmaceuticals, stone polishing, dyeing, printing, ceramics, powerloom industries etc.

Wage Board for journalists and non journalists

2823. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Wage Board for working Journalists and non-journalists has been constituted;

(b) if so, terms of reference of such a board; and

(c) whether the board has been directed to submit its report positively by 30th September, 1998?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) The Government constituted two wage Boards, one for the working journalists and the other for Non-Journalists newspaper and news-agency employees on 2.9.1994 for fixing.and revising rates of wages under sections 9 and 13-C of the working Journalists and other newspaper employees (Conditions of Service) and Misc. Provisions Act, 1955 respectively;

(c) No time frame was fixed for the submission of the report of the age Boards. However, in view of the demands of the newspaper employees, the Chairman, Wage Board has been requested to submit the report by September, 1998.